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**Local Boundary Commission
550 West 7th Ave., Suite 1770
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3510**

RE: Boroughization of Prince of Wales Island

Dear Local Boundary Commission,

I am writing you in regards to your recommendation to make Prince of Wales Island a Borough.

I am an Alaskan Native; I've lived in Kasaan, located on Prince of Wales Island, since 1979. I've been actively involved as a Resident and Council member on both local governments, the City of Kasaan and Organized Village of Kasaan.

The economy was great several years ago with the fishing and timber industries, but in the last few years, both of those industries have declined greatly. I've worked in both the fishing and timber industries. Due to the heavy decline of both of these industries, I've had to find work off the island. This is a hardship for not only me, but for my family. However, I do need to work to be able to support my family and continue to live in Kasaan.

I feel that it is ludicrous to even consider making this island a Borough. We don't have the people or economy to support any type of Borough at this time. The data you have to support Prince of Wales Island having a Borough is so out dated that it's not even funny. There is only one small hatchery on Prince of Wales Island that employs only a handful of people, located in Klawock. Canneries are closing down on Prince of Wales Island (read Ketchikan Newspaper about the Ward Cove Cannery is shutting down all operations). Logging is gone, the Thorne Bay Sorting Yard is CLOSED and for my community, the last fishing permit holder sold his permit a few years ago and the only Sawmill we had, is CLOSED.

Historically, the fishing and timber industries on Prince of Wales Island had sustained Prince of Wales Island's economy. In fact, many of the communities were primarily built because of the fishing and timber industries. The only communities that where here first are the native villages and they even depend on the fishing and timber industries to support their economy.

I understand that the State of Alaska also is being affected by the whole state's economy, and I understand that by having four separate school districts on Prince of Wales Island is not financially good for the State.

Nevertheless, if it comes down to it, I would rather see the four school districts united under one school district than seeing this island becoming a Borough. The residents on Prince of Wales Island could not pay any type of taxation it would take to sustain a Borough.

Thank you for taking time to read my comments.

Sincerely,


Leo L. Peterson